Discover how working with the lunar phases could bring a touch of magic into your life. By Ursula James

oon magic can be particularly strong for women, as we are so connected to its power through our own menstrual cycles. With modern life, it is often easy to forget about this connection, and, by doing so, miss out on fantastic opportunities to harness the power of each phase.

In this column I want to show you how best to use these cycles for health, relationships and personal success. Each phase has its own special meaning, but so too do different moons throughout the year.

Over the coming months, I want to show you how this connection to the Moon may help you, no matter what stage you are at in your own life.

MAKE THE CONNECTION

Before working with the Moon cycles to make changes in your life, it is good to use a simple ritual to make your connection with the Moon. In doing this you are connecting with the psychic, spiritual side of yourself. With this simple ritual you are making a space to listen to your intuition.

When you first work with Moon magic, there is often an underlying fear it won't work for you because you 'don't deserve it'. But by making your first act a giving one, you earn your connection with this magic.

Each month the magic will grow – as will your confidence in being a person who makes magic happen for themselves and others. Go on, give it a go – what have you got to lose?

Try this simple ritual

THE SIMPLEST WAY TO MAKE YOUR CONNECTION WHEN DOING MOON MAGIC IS TO ALWAYS USE THE SAME WHITE CANDLE. I LIKE TO USE ONES ENCASED IN GLASS AS THEY ARE SAFER.

On the evening of a new Moon, place the candle close to a window so you can see the sky. Light the candle and make yourself comfortable. Focus on the flame. As you do, simply invite Moon magic to be part of your life. You do not need to state exactly what it is you want, but by making the connection you are opening up your mind to the possibility of magic in your life.

Spend a little time watching the flame, or even close your eyes and see it in your mind's eye. When you have invited Moon magic into your life, you must give something in return. Make a promise to do a good deed for someone else or give them a gift of some sort – preferably with them not knowing it is from you. This symbolically becomes your offering to the Moon.

When you have decided on the gift, be it your time or a present, or unconditional love to someone who has not been kind to you, you are ready to put out the candle.

ready to put out the candle. As the Moon works its way through the phases, you will find the gift that you gave changes something: a relationship perhaps, or a feeling that you had about yourself. The full Moon will bring a gift to you, and the waning Moon will help you to let go of any negative thoughts or feeling.

■ Ursula James is author of *The Source – a manual of everyday magic* (Random House; £12.99), which she channelled from the teachings of a centuries-old witch. Ursula is also a clinical hypnotherapist. Visit her at ursulaiames.info

NEW MOON (FEB 4TH) a time of mental and spiritual preparation WAXING MOON a time to set in motion new ideas FULL MOON (FEB 19TH) a time of fruition

a time or clearing out a time for clearing out and letting go